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Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM *(now on duty with the armed forces)*

HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor;* MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor;* C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor;* JOHN C. CORT, *Associate Editor;* JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

"No Law nor Restraint"

PIUS XII's speech of March 12 surely expressed the yearning and hope of substantially every Italian; and it expressed a principle to which we have constantly pointed and which peculiarly needs emphasis at this juncture in history. He says it very explicitly: ". . . towns stricken on nearly every continent by aerial war that knows no law nor restraint—in itself a terrible accusation against the cruelty of such fighting methods . . ." Once again the Holy Father insists that men have it within their choice to limit the means they use to obtain their ends, that the belligerents—either or both—can deliberately refuse the destruction of Rome, the bombing of civilians anywhere (except by accident), the deportation of whole populations for tyrannical purposes. We are all caught up in what might be called the automatism of the military machine. We tend altogether too much to think that it is legitimate to allow this machine to ride roughshod over everything, precisely as a tank will plough its way through a forest or a bomb will plough its way down into a hospital. We forget that every tank has its driver; every bomb (again barring accidents) has its bombardier; every decision of military policy, generals and politicians determining that policy; every machine, a human will directing it and responsible for it. That is the gist of what the Pope tells us: we are still, all of us, friend and foe, responsible human persons.

Children into Beasts

SOMETIMES one has to be ridiculous, sometimes there is no way of avoiding a stupendous disparity between the immense and the minute which must, essentially, be comic. Here, we have been writing about the bombing of women and children in the cities of Europe and the impending doom of the cities; we have been indignant about the fate of the entire Jewish population of Europe; we have been looking at an immense war, at all the nations which are engaged in that war. The subject has always been an immense subject. In these times all of us live confronted by tragedy on a vast scale, by a cosmic valor. What we have to save is nothing less than civilization.

Well then, to write suddenly about a fox in Holmes County, Ohio, is funny. There is Thérèse Bonney's book which shows what is happening to the children of Europe, there is the starvation, the despair, the disease and the death of innumerable European children, and then there is a picture in *Life* (March 13) which shows what happened to the fox in Ohio. It appears that Holmes County was bothered by a fox, or perhaps several foxes, but certainly not by innumerable foxes, certainly not by a plague of foxes. The foxes were not there like a plague of locusts. It then appears that to shoot the fox one had to have a license, pay for a license. So the Ohio farmers used man's intelligence. Six hundred strong, armed with clubs, they formed a great circle, then, gradually, they narrowed the circle. The fox was within the circle from which it could not break out. The fox ran round and round in a circle until it was exhausted. When the circle had shrunk to the size of a garden, the six hundred farmers let their children have their fun. They delegated a grinning child to kill the fox with a club. The fox lay down in the circle and the grinning boy broke its back. The fox crawled a few feet and the boy beat its brains out.

While this was going on, they had themselves photographed — grinning, giggling, excited, moronic. But the boy who killed the fox was still not young enough, so they posed a child of four waving a stick over the dead fox. *Life* says bitterly that the Ohio farmers think this is sport.

It seems ridiculous to complain, even if we say that it is all right about the fox, even if we say that it is only the children that we are worried about. But we think that cruelty is indivisible, that it does not matter on what scale or against what or against whom it is applied. We think that a training school for cruelty could be efficient if it furnished as objects nothing more than dolls. We

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think, therefore, that the Ohio farmers with their method of fox hunting will beat a few animals into a cruel death but will also—they should not be surprised—turn their children into beasts.

Eire's Case

PREMIER DE VALERA'S reply to the American request for the expulsion of German and Japanese diplomatic representatives rests squarely on the wishes of the majority of his people. Conscious still of British injustices to Ireland in the past and currently aggrieved by the continuance and hostile attitude of Ulster, the Irish have wanted no part in this war. They are unwilling to go beyond "friendly neutrality" in their relations with the United States and Britain. Officially and as a people, at least. For it must not be forgotten that thousands of young Irishmen are fighting as volunteers with the British armed forces.

There can be no question, either, as to the sincerity and conscientiousness with which the de Valera government in its neutrality has sought to prevent Axis espionage. Despite disaffection for the British, no one can legitimately criticize the policy of Dublin on that score. And, finally, the position which the Irish Prime Minister seeks to maintain in regard to the Axis diplomats and consular officials is entirely a correct one. He has the legal right to maintain his present stand.

Despite all this the weight of the evidence does indicate that Eire should accede to this request. It is the fact that the German representatives in Dublin—as elsewhere—have succeeded in keeping Berlin well supplied with information about the allied forces. As in other countries they have succeeded in circumventing the Irish authorities. And now that the time has come for the big invasion based on Britain and Ulster, this information has to be shut off. Thousands of brave young lives are at stake. Upon the success of this invasion depends the whole course of the war.

Contrast this moment with the earlier days of the conflict when British insistence on access to Irish ports and bases—when they were most gravely needed—might indeed have thrown Eire into the war. Today Anglo-American control of the air and sea, together with the troop concentrations in Ulster, is adequate to protect the twenty-six counties from attack. Dismissal of the German and Japanese representatives would indeed be an unfriendly act, but it need not bring Eire into the war.

For this reason it would cause no great hardship to the Irish people. It would assure the essential secrecy of our preparations, save thousands of lives—including the lives of many Irishmen and Irish Americans—and hasten the end of the war itself. What Eire is being asked to sacrifice, then, is a certain measure of sovereignty. And to sacrifice it for the common good, the well-being of all humanity. If Eire freely took such a step at this critical juncture in a struggle against totalitarian ambitions, would it not be a source of national pride in the years to come?

The Eire dispute provides a good example of the type of conflict between national sovereignty and international well-being which the postwar world must solve. For occasions will arise, similar to this one, where the giving up of certain national rights in the interests of the other nations is the only possible way out. Without limitations on national independence of action, an effective international organization to establish and maintain peace with justice is unthinkable.

Realist

THE ITALIAN KING and Marshal Badoglio are now recognized as the Italian Government by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. A Russian Ambassador will come to Italy; an Italian Ambassador will go to Russia. So that is settled. The Italian people will say that is settled and what difference does it make to us. The American professional liberals will say that the world is coming to an end, and the Italian people will not care at all what the American liberals say or do not say. For the Italian people are in the depths of despair. They tried to get out of the war and they could not get out of the war. They are hemmed in the war from the north and from the south. It is true that they have the Mediterranean and the Adriatic; they can go and jump in the sea. That's all they can do.

The Italian people hear nothing from the Americans, but if they had heard the American liberals arguing about their King and Badoglio they would have said *per carita*—out of charity—stop talking. That is what they have in fact said to the chatter in Bari, to the chatter in Naples. They have said that the situation was not one which could be changed by talk. They said that the United Nations would liberate eventually a ruined Italy and the only words they were interested in were those of the Pope, or of anyone else, pleading that something might be saved of the ruins of Italy.

When the American liberals and the American communists and the Italo-American communists and liberals told the Italian people to rise against the Germans and be massacred, the Italian people said we are being massacred anyway by the Germans, by the fascists, by that swine Farinacci, by Liberators and Marauders, by the cost of living. We have lost our war; this is your war. But it does not matter what name it is given. We have had enough of it no matter what it is called. That is what the Italian people have been saying. The Italian people are through.

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What remains? Outside of the German zone there remain some Italian sailors with some ships, some Italian soldiers who can be armed. These Italians take orders from the only government they know: that of the King and Badoglio. It remains to be proved that they would take orders from anyone else.

That is the situation which Marshal Stalin and Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill have had to appraise. Stalin knew that, in Italy, as in America, there existed no Communist Party which could do anything at all—his agents have been telling him that for years. Roosevelt looked at the liberals in Sicily, in Calabria, in Naples, and he could count them on his fingers. Churchill remarked that he rather liked Kings anyway. All three of these men looked beyond the politicians, even beyond Sforza, who is a noble politician, at an harassed and desolated Italian people without will, organization or hope, and then they went back to the job of the war.

A Note on Argentina

JEALOUSY of the power of the United States in this hemisphere is normally the chief explanation offered for the lone hand being played by the Argentine Republic. It is also held to account for the recent moves to build up a disruptive bloc, which thus far includes Bolivia, Chile and Paraguay—all of which have now recognized General Edelmiro Farrell's new régime. Strongly democratic Uruguay must be under considerable pressure.

Feeling against the United States does play a part in all this, of course, but it is unlikely that it is the principal element. There is a clue in the fact that the Ramirez group took over in the first place, almost a year ago, because President Castillo had been unsuccessful in obtaining arms and machinery from the United States. Meanwhile we had been energetically aiding far more populous Brazil to build up her national defenses. Not only did we collaborate in the construction of strategic airports and the building of extensive facilities for the manufacture of steel. The Brazilian army, navy and air force have been greatly strengthened. A number of observers agree that the present government in Buenos Aires is more concerned lest Brazil hold far and away the leading place in South America than it is about hegemony of the United States in Latin America. Argentine rivalry with Brazil is the gravest single obstacle to solidarity of the Americas. It constitutes a dangerous threat to the peace.

There is one other factor that must not be neglected. The most ardent supporters of the government now in the saddle at Buenos Aires are the large landowners, who are primarily grain and cattle raisers. They want their country to continue to major in the production of raw materials, for in this way what remains of their vast holdings will not be broken up. Opposed to them is a growing class of business men who are convinced that the future of the Argentine depends on the development of her own manufactures. During the war there is an abnormal demand for raw materials, but much of it is only temporary. Therefore after the war the Colonels' régime may fall afoul of economic pressure, if it does not lose out because of its unfriendliness toward the enemies of the defeated Axis. Nothing seems settled in Buenos Aires for very long.

Getting More Than Was Bargained for

MEN WHO ARE honestly incensed by race prejudice, and by those who seek to disseminate such prejudice, are all too likely to think that the solution lies in legislation. What might be called the will-o'-the-wisp of group libel has recurring attraction for them. And now a bill has been introduced in Congress to apply this concept by means of Post Office censorship. The Lynch Bill provides that the Postmaster General shall have authority to bar from the mails "all papers, pamphlets, books, etc., containing any defamatory and false statements which tend to expose persons characterized by race or religion to hatred, contempt, ridicule, etc."

We oppose this legislation first of all because we do not believe that the Postmaster General should have any more authority to exercise censorship than he already has. The present incumbent emphatically says that he has burdens enough of this sort. But far more important ground for opposition lies in the general basic principle that the admission of group libel constitutes a tremendous curtailment of the area of free speech. For under group libel, action can be taken to suppress any publication which discusses groups of citizens. To be specific, Catholic papers might well no longer be free to defend the Church against group accusations, except in the most vague and pallid terms. Certainly no printed criticism of any church would be lawful. Negro papers might no longer be free to object to the action of white groups. White papers might no longer be free to speak frankly about Negroes. And the net result would be merely to drive all our existing resentments underground, where they would fester far worse than they do at present.

The only sound and decent way to combat group feelings of animosity is on the level of frank and open discussion, and if in the course of this discussion it is necessary to tolerate utterances inspired by prejudice and characterized by falsehood, that is the price we must pay for the manly effort at a real cure. To pass the Lynch Bill will merely be to yield to the spell of escapism.

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Puerto Rico: Problem Child

First hand impressions of a recent visitor

Leo J. Trese

THE PROBLEM of Puerto Rico can be—and invariably is—stated with great simplicity: Puerto Rico is tremendously overpopulated; therefore Puerto Ricans are appallingly poor. As with so many general statements, this very simplicity makes it an inaccurate appraisal. It is like saying that Germany is losing the war because so many of her soldiers are being killed. It might be countered that Russia is winning the war because so many of *her* soldiers are being killed. Neither statement means much, alone.

It is true that Puerto Rico, a Caribbean island less than 40 miles across, and about 100 miles long, counts a population of more than 2,000,000. One interested in figures will quickly discover that this means a population of about 500 persons per square mile—a dense population in any sociologist's notebook. However, the city of Detroit, with an area of perhaps 200 square miles, also supports a population in excess of 2,000,000. The difference is not one of area, but of industry.

First of all, the reality of Puerto Rican poverty cannot be too strongly emphasized. I spent an afternoon slogging through the mud and slime of one of San Juan's notorious slums—this one Fonguito by name. Here some 7000 families (no one knows how many individuals) exist within a few square acres of public swamp-land on the shore of San Juan Bay. They live in shacks crowded one against the other, shacks no larger than goat-sheds, some reminiscent of decrepit out-door privies in parts of rural America. Fonguito is one of several such slums in and around San Juan. There are others as bad—none could be worse—in other districts of the Island.

The Spanish Augustinian Father who has the spiritual care of Fonguito was my companion. We entered a shack here and there, visiting the sick: a young man of 20, syphilitic and intermittently insane; a middle-aged woman in the last stages of tuberculosis; a young matron dying. As I followed gingerly down the narrow lanes, stepping from tin cans to rocks in the vain hope of preserving dry feet; as I passed here a little girl minus a hand, there another startlingly cross-eyed; here a one-legged boy and there a man with legs incredibly twisted beneath him; as I looked at naked children squatting in the scum, playing with empty bottles, and lean pigs rooting in the mire beside the children—it seemed like a horribly overdone movie set, an impossible nadir of human misery. My companion was seeing the same sights every day. I doubt whether he could appreciate the shock to a first observer.

As a natural consequence of poverty, beggary is rampant in Puerto Rico. Here a stroll through the streets of almost any town means a constant succession of outstretched hands—some of them old, infirm, or crippled, but most of them children's hands—and a repeated chorus of "give me a penny, give me a nickel!"

Another result of poverty is unabashed harlotry. In San Juan alone there are an estimated 5000 street-walkers, most of them young girls. Parents sometimes take their daughters of 14 or 15 and personally introduce them to the proprietors of San Juan's infamous "Skid Row" dives. Thenceforth the daughter is expected to support the family through the profitable soldier-and-sailor trade.

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The causes of this abysmal poverty are several. It is not simply that there are too many people, but rather that there are too many people for the present economy of the Island. The industries of the Island are agricultural: sugar (and its derivative, rum), tobacco and coffee. But sugar is so preponderantly in the lead that Puerto Rico may be said to be a one-crop country.

A purely agricultural economy cannot support a dense population, particularly when so highly specialized as in Puerto Rico. As the number of workers in the rural sections becomes excessive, the excess—particularly the less able and the more lazy—drift to the cities, where they reach bottom in the slums. Here they barely subsist on such odd pennies as can be had from casual odd jobs, beggary, thievery, prostitution, and inadequate Government relief. No official unemployment figures ever can be accurate, because thousands are classified as employed (for example the ubiquitous street-vendors and peddlers) whose income is below any imaginable standard.

The present Governor, Rexford Tugwell, has publicly stated that conditions in the Island today are as bad as, if not worse than, when the United

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States wrested Puerto Rico from Spain some 46 years ago, in spite of the billions of dollars of American money that has been poured into the country. His statement is emphatically seconded by Bishop Aloysius Willinger of Ponce, whose years of missionary service in the Island make him an understanding and impartial authority.

In an interview with Governor Tugwell, the writer asked as to the effect of absentee ownership of sugar production upon the Island's economy. Mr. Tugwell answered that not more than one-half the stock in Island sugar centrals and plantations is held by capital outside the Island. Moreover, said the Governor, since the United States tariff preferential of 90 cents per hundredweight for Puerto Rican sugar is greater than the profit actually realized on the sugar, there is no draining of local resources by continental owners. The drainage is from the pocket-books of United States citizens who pay more for their sugar.

The problem is not merely that the rapid growth in population has outstripped whatever social benefits American funds have achieved. It is not merely that the replacing of Spanish absentee ownership with local and American ownership still leaves the wealth of the Island in the hands of comparatively few families. There is in addition a factor which is no less powerful for being less tangible: a seemingly fundamental flaw in the character of the average Puerto Rican. Some call it laziness, some call it undependability, some call it materialism. Whatever the nature of the fault, everyone to whom the writer spoke—including many Puerto Ricans—were agreed as to its reality. Perhaps it has resulted, as some think, from the infiltration of American hedonism without a corresponding acceptance of American idealism. That is one widely-held opinion. One of the Spanish missionaries says that the Puerto Ricans imitate the American in his free spending, but not in his thrifty saving. They will follow the American example of eat, drink, and have a good time, but not the American example of hard work to get the wherewithal.

This much is certain: if the average laborer here can subsist on $5.00 per week, and has a job paying $10.00 per week, he cannot perceive any advantage in working more than half a week. Perhaps American materialism has nothing to do with it. It very possibly may be that this apathy, this "cui bono" attitude, is the precipitation of years of abject poverty; a numbing process which has killed initiative and foresight. Perhaps it is as well that Puerto Rico's poor have been apathetic. If the writer were condemned to live and die in Puerto Rico's slums, and were not a believing Christian with faith in the ultimate conquest of the Gospel of Christ, he most certainly would be a militant Communist.

It may seem strange that in a supposedly Catholic commonwealth, the inherent dignity of labor should be so lightly regarded; but it is true that to the average Puerto Rican, physical labor is an evil to be avoided so far as possible. Consequently, no dishonor is attached to beggary or chicanery. There are of course numerous and notable exceptions, particularly in some of the rural areas where Christian faith and practice still are strong.

It is this lack of what we in the States would term "ambition" that has been the greatest obstacle in the efforts of Government and Church to establish cooperatives. Experiments have been made in sugar, tobacco, fishing and marketing cooperatives, with varying degrees of success. The tendency to slacken off and lose interest on the part of members, resultant jealousies on the part of those who feel that they are doing more than their share, bickerings and disagreements and failure to fulfill quotas—these are some of things that make the sponsoring of a cooperative a true labor of love.

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This is not the place to detail the history of Puerto Rico either before or since American occupation in 1898. Puerto Ricans to whom I have talked seem pretty well agreed that the United States rule has accomplished far more for the Island, physically, than could have been expected from Spanish titularship. On the political side, since 1917 every Puerto Rican possesses full United States citizenship, as completely as does a New Yorker or a Chicagoan. With its own legislature and judicial system, Puerto Rico yet remains a territory, although Rexford Tugwell seems destined to be the last appointive Governor. With the proposed introduction of an elective governorship, the Island will approach close to statehood. Under the present Organic Act of 1917, and still more fully under the proposed revisions, Puerto Rico possesses a high degree of autonomy, in addition to certain financial benefits and tax preferentials which even our own states do not have.

Today there is very little expressed sentiment for independence. Puerto Ricans themselves feel that without economic aid from the United States, Island economy would be in chaos. The sugar industry, for example, would face ruin if forced to compete in the open world market, without benefit of preference from the United States. This is not to say, necessarily, that the sugar industry is worth saving. On the contrary, any industry which exists only by virtue of constant "shots in the arm," and still leaves its workers impoverished, would seem to be of questionable value. However, the sugar industry cannot well be abandoned unless and until something more effective is found to replace it. That is the whole crux of the economic problem.

As a consequence, Puerto Ricans are not now

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asking for independence, but this does not mean that the United States is therefore loved and respected by the Islanders. As one cultivated Puerto Rican was frank enough to say, in answer to a question on this point: "Concerning independence, we think with our stomachs. We know that the price of independence would be financial ruin for us all. But in our hearts, I think we all hope for the day when independence will be possible. I will be honest with you. I don't think any Puerto Rican has any real love for the United States, in the same way in which you North Americans love your country. Our ways of life, our cultures, our temperaments are too different. If you will consult the Continentals (North Americans) who live here, you will find that most of them do not like us and do not trust us. I am afraid that feeling is mutual. Of course, it is because we do not understand each other; but I question whether we ever can."

The American impulse is to take short-cuts, to plow crops under in order to raise prices, to cut off the head in order to cure the head-ache. So it is not surprising that one of the first New Deal efforts to cope with the problem of poverty was to introduce contraception to the Island, under official auspices. Responding to American pressure and influence, a Birth Control bill was passed by the Island legislature. For the sake of appearance, it was signed by the Puerto Rican Acting-Governor, a native, the then Governor Winship having found a plausible reason for leaving his post at the time.

As was to be expected, birth control proved popular only with the prosperous. It has failed to reach the poor, and obviously will continue so to fail. Every couple applying for a marriage license is handed a sheet of instructions outlining the advantages of family limitation, and urging them to consult a doctor for specific instructions. But a majority of the poor still cannot read; as a matter of fact great numbers of them do not bother to formalize their unions by a marriage ceremony. Certainly they have no money for doctors, even when ill.

To meet this last difficulty, plans are now under way to increase the number of free medical clinics scattered throughout the Island—clinics where "hygienic" information and instruction can be given gratis to all. It is another evidence of the inability of the American to understand the Puerto Rican. When the *jibaro* or *campesino* is in the mood for self-gratification, he will not be delayed or annoyed with mechanical gadgets or drugs, free or otherwise. His religious knowledge may be sketchy, and his moral sense rudimentary, but he just cannot be made to see that it is wrong to have a baby.

A more practical and effective check to population would be a religious and moral revival that would help to eliminate the 32 percent of illegitimate births. At the time the Birth Control Act passed the legislature, wags were remarking that what was needed was not limitation of the family, but limitation of the number of families one man can have. This points up a strange sidelight on Puerto Rican morals—the fact that a man's financial standing frequently is witnessed by the number of women he can keep, and the number of children he can father. No social censure attaches to the simultaneous support of several conjugal establishments. It is a point of view hard for us North Americans to grasp, but too many cases-in-point were cited by my informants for me to question the reality of the fact.

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At this juncture it is time to ask: "What is the Catholic Church doing in Puerto Rico?" If, as stated above, there is such a widespread contempt for the dignity of labor, and if there is such looseness of morals, where lies the blame? To answer that bluntly, I would say that today the Catholic Church is fighting a losing battle in Puerto Rico. The problem of the Island is the problem of the Church—poverty. Puerto Rico is not considered a missionary country. The Bishops (Bishop Davis at San Juan and Bishop Willinger at Ponce) and the priests have to do the best they can with the means at their disposal. Because the people are poor, the Church is poor. There are but few Catholic schools, and not a single Catholic college on the Island. Because of this, and because of lack of funds for ecclesiastical education, vocations are few. Of the 240 priests now in the Island (for 2,000,000 people there should be at least 2,000), only 40 are native Puerto Ricans; the others are members of American and Spanish religious orders working as missionaries in the Island. By way of contrast, the Protestant churches of America have some 500 ministers at work in Puerto Rico, supplied with seemingly inexhaustible funds. The Protestants are reaping the natural harvest of Continental American Catholic neglect. What religious conditions may have been like under Spanish dominion, I do not know. Some of the older Puerto Ricans have told me sadly of the crowded churches of their youth. But when it is remembered that the population of the Island has more than doubled in the past fifty years, it is hard to make comparisons that have real value. The one thing that stands out today is that Puerto Rico is fast becoming a land of religious indifferentists.

It is within comparatively recent years, particularly since the rise of Luis Muñoz Marin as leader of the Popular Party, and the advent of Rexford Tugwell as Governor, that a sustained effort has been undertaken to conquer the problem of poverty on the Island. Muñoz Marin and Tugwell

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have formed a team whose rooting-section includes the landless, the workers, and the *jibaros* (peasants). That means just about everybody on the Island except the wealthy. The bishops and the priests to whom I spoke, all view Tugwell with approval. They feel that he is honest and sincere in his efforts to ameliorate the lot of the poor, and that he is headed in the right direction. Here in Puerto Rico there are only the poor, who are many, and the rich, who are few. There is practically no so-called middle class—the landed farmers, the small business men, the skilled laborers, who form the backbone of United States economics and politics. Here, driving along a highway, one may raise his eyes from a row of wretched shanties, each housing in one or two rooms anywhere from five to fifteen human beings, and see upon a hill above a spacious mansion used by some millionaire as a summer home for a few weeks each year. It is a reality that is also a symbol.

Tugwell and Muñoz Marin between them have been accused of making Puerto Rico an experiment in socialization. Light and power, water and communications, are now Government owned. Transportation is the current project for socialization, and Island capitalists fear that sugar centrals and rum distilleries may be next on the list. Needless to say, the rich and the well-to-do of the Island dislike Tugwell with an intensity that is second only to their scorn for Muñoz Marin.

Under PRRA (Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration) set up in 1936, and functioning under Governors Leahy and Tugwell, schools have multiplied, housing projects have been scattered across the Island, resettlement has been effected—but still the surface only has been scratched. Hundreds of thousands continue to live in poverty and insecurity. In the matter of schools, for example: it is estimated that fully a third of Puerto Rico's children are getting no schooling at all; of those who are in school, at least half will get no farther than the fourth grade. In the matter of federal housing: the housing projects, including the famous Eleanor Roosevelt project, do not benefit the slum dwellers; they can be occupied only by those having a fixed income ($15.00 per week is the usual minimum), which excludes the slum dweller.

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The writer asked Governor Tugwell a series of frank questions, and received equally frank answers, although sometimes the answer was a simple, "I don't know." The following is the gist of what might be called Mr. Tugwell's hopes, if not his program:

First of all, large-scale emigration, which might be one answer to the problem of poverty, is not feasible. There are South American countries, Venezuela for example, which would welcome immigrants from Puerto Rico, but the Islander loves his home with a deep devotion, and extensive emigration never will be attractive enough to reduce population materially.

Acquisition and re-distribution of the land by the Government would not be an effective solution. Even if all the land would be thus distributed, there is not enough arable land to support all the people. Nor is it practicable to divide the sugar plantation lands among the workers, with a Central operated either federally or cooperatively. The land must be worked in vast tracts with expensive machinery, to even approach profitableness; every acre of it must be under the control of highly expert technicians; any system of parceling the land out to individuals would end in the loss of everything.

At this point I asked Mr. Tugwell concerning his reputed socialistic leanings. He answered that in Puerto Rico the public utilities must be in Government hands, if they are to be made available to the mass of the people. As to industry, there is no question of Government ownership, for the simple reason that the Insular Government has not the capital to acquire and develop industries. What the government hopes to do is to form something of a partnership with private capital in the establishment of industries, by underwriting, to a certain degree, the risks involved. The Government hopes to coax into productivity some of the idle millions of dollars which have been lying dormant for years in the Puerto Rican banks.

The long-term solution of the problem, according to Governor Tugwell, lies in the establishment of many industries to provide employment for all the Island's employables; industries which can take profitable advantage of the Island's three great natural resources; an ideal year-round climate; cheap water transportation to the ports of the world; and low living costs, which mean lower labor costs. Living costs are lower because the mild climate makes housing much cheaper than in Northern latitudes, and because the preferred diet of the people—beans, rice, fish and fruit—is a simple and comparatively inexpensive one. There has long been a profitable needlework industry in Puerto Rico, with the raw materials shipped in and the finished product shipped out. A cement plant and a bottle factory have come into being under Government auspices, and a paper-mill is now in process of erection. Any industry in which the raw materials can be shipped in economically, and in which labor costs are a dominant factor, will be profitable in Puerto Rico. We need have no fear of the exploitation of labor. Already Puerto Rican labor, in spite of a glut on the market, is highly articulate. (During my stay in Puerto Rico, the workers at the Island's larg-

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est rum distillery, staged a successful strike with resultant higher wages.)

For the immediate relief of slum conditions, Governor Tugwell says, the crying need is sanitation. Housing itself presents no great obstacle, since it is merely a case of providing a shelter that will keep off the sun and rain. Nor is nutrition an insoluble problem, since the diet is a simple one. As for the sanitation, the Insular Government is at present buying, as funds are available, tracts of dry and healthful land in various parts of the Island. To these the slum dwellers will be moved. With adequate shelter, a subsistence plot of land, and an uncontaminated water-supply conveniently available, Puerto Rico's most immediate and crying need will be met.

How well and how fully these plans and these hopes may materialize, only time can tell. It is something that the problem has been recognized; it is something that efforts are being made. Certainly as an American, with a responsibility for my Latin brothers in Puerto Rico, I shall sleep more soundly when I know that such blots as Fonguito have ceased to exist under the Stars and Stripes.

Christian Revolutionaries

DONALD ATTWATER

THERE is an English proverb, "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him." It is an old dodge, which can be found in action throughout recorded history. It was, and is, used with devastating effect by propagandists; it was, and is, an unconscious irrationality that plays havoc among the thoughtless and lazy-minded—and not them alone. And it is used not only of persons and groups and policies and philosophies, but even of common words—or rather, of the concrete realities they are supposed to represent.

Such a word is *revolution,* a word rich in content and meaning, which with its derivatives takes up a column of small print in the "Shorter Oxford English Dictionary." I was recently explaining in conversation the scope of some short studies of contemporaries, to be called "The Christian Revolutionaries Series." I was interrupted by the statement that a Christian, or at any rate a Catholic, cannot be a revolutionary. This rocked me back on my heels; but the Lord delivered the speaker into my hands—for he was an American. "There is an event in history," I replied, "that, as an Englishman, I call "The American War of Independence." *You,* I suppose, call it 'The Revolutionary War'; or do you, a Catholic American, repudiate that war and its name?" He did not pursue the subject further, and it left me thinking.

The word *revolution* as commonly used connotes physical violence and the subversion of social order; both those who fear and those who welcome the thing like to think of it in terms of the barricades. Here the pertinent definition of the "Shorter Oxford" is "the complete overthrow of the established government in any country or state by those who were previously subject to it: a forcible substitution of a new ruler or form of government."

But antecedent to that is given a yet older meaning, of "a great change in affairs or in some particular thing." And even today, when "all right-thinking people" and the Marxists and others have done their worst, that remains (in this connection) the basic meaning of the word. "Revolutionary" is a name that may be rightly given to anyone who seriously dissociates himself from any widely-accepted and well-established state of affairs or social or other system and the principles and philosophy pertinent to it. Since I suspect that, at its origin about the year 1850, the noun *revolutionary* (as distinct from *revolution,* which is much older) started life as a term of abuse (which would account for its popular definition in negative terms), it is better defined more positively, as, say, *"an advocate of principles and policies* which involve dissociation from and reversal of established ways of thought, systems, etc." A revolution may be good or bad, great or small, personal or widespread; it has no necessary connection with barricades or bloodshed, with *sans-culottes* or fascist marches or Red ruin, with private property or socialism or any such thing. And in the first place it is a matter of the mind and spirit: in former days one use of the word meant, "The action of turning over in the mind; consideration; reflection."

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Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was a revolutionary. It was on that very charge that he was brought before Pilate. But the nature of his revolution was misrepresented by his accusers then, and it is misconceived by political *enragés* among his spokesmen today. Christ was not a political revolutionary: to forbid to pay taxes to Caesar was precisely what he did not do; that he did not lead a national rising against the Roman oppressors of his people was what lost him many supporters. He was not concerned with the Romans in Palestine (say, with the English "ascendency" in Ireland, or Mussolini in Ethiopia). Indeed, he directed what was due to the foreign and infidel tyrant should be rendered to him; and it was among the heathen Roman soldiers he found a man of greater faith than any in Israel (say, a superlatively righteous man among the nazi troops in Poland).

Christ's revolution was far deeper and wider, both more far-reaching and more personal. It was of the spirit.

At any time, in any society, what could be more revolutionary, a greater change from the estab-

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lished ways of thought and life of ordinary people than: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," don't worry about tomorrow, "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," a man is defiled by what comes out of his mouth, "Be perfect," don't lay up treasures on earth, "Judge not" "Teach all nations...." Revolutionary indeed.

"I am the resurrection and the life... the way, the truth and the life." I, *I*, Jesus Christ, the dusty-footed prophet from Galilee. I—not Caius Julius Caesar Octavian Augustus, not Simeon bar-Kokba, the patriotic rebel, not the Holy Roman Empire and the Two Swords, not the New Learning, not the prophets of the Enlightenment and the Principles of Eighty-nine, not Marx and the Nationalization of the Means of Production, Distribution and Exchange. The world's greatest revolution is not a matter of big names and big organizations and big money, it is not any political or social system or device or "ideology": it is a Man—and to the outward seeming of his day a man not essentially different from his fellows: "Is not this the carpenter's son?"

The Christian revolution can be theologized, legalized, devotionalized, modernized into "harmlessness," corrupted into propaganda and partisanry, watered down into nothingness: but it remains for all to see in the earthly life and teaching of Christ, recorded in the scriptures and tradition of the Church.

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That spiritual revolution has constant repercussions in all affairs of life. It constrains to feed the hungry, care for the sick in mind or body, look after the orphaned and widowed, to deal justly. In another aspect it constrains to search the things of God: not only the sacred things but also the technically profane things; for example, God manifest in "nature," what is currently called "science." It can call for the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights and the freeing of the Negro slaves. There is nothing (except sin and error) profane to the Christian revolution —and that revolution is itself greater than any accidental and contingent change to which it may give rise. And it is personal; if it acts on masses, it is through individuals, and acts on each individual in the mass—he, she, is converted, revolutionized—the two words mean the same thing. And it must begin with the personal universal human things and relations; if the Christian revolution touches governments and nations it does so last, not first. Not for nothing did Father Bede Jarrett, of the Order of Preachers, use to speak of the "deadly scandal of ordinary life" among Christians. A revolutionary is by definition not ordinary.

The late Eric Gill once wrote (in "Work and Property") an essay called "Art and Revolution" which is extremely puzzling to those to whom the epithet *revolutionary* is commonly applied: only at the end does he refer to them at all—and then to dismiss them as mere "progressives." "Instead of the present world," he said, "they want the world which the present one *implies*. They want the same thing only more so—the same things only more of them.... Merely to transfer ownership from private persons to the state is no revolution; it is only a natural development. Government by the proletariat is no revolution; it is only the natural sequel to the enfranchisement of lodgers.... And merely to proclaim an atheist government is no revolution—for that would be to make explicit what is already implicit in capitalist commercialism: but to return to Christianity would be truly revolutionary."

The principal current connotation of the word *revolution* is indeed a drastic change in socio-economic organization and conditions, to be brought about by "direct action" and in accordance with political, social and economic principles. But Christian social principles are personal responsibility, poverty (in the gospel sense of a decent sufficiency—no more), love of God, and therefore of man. Those principles are really revolutionary, they would really turn the world upside down; and consistently followed they would probably involve us in some very surprising and extreme political and social measures—but with that I am not now concerned. In a socialist state, socialism is no longer revolutionary; but justice and righteousness and love (in individual persons *first*) will always be revolutionary, until mankind is finally remade in the unspoiled likeness of God—and then this world and all its glory and shame will have passed.

★

I referred above to a series of books dealing with contemporaries who have, in one way or another, manifested the revolutionaryness of Christianity. It all began with an essay on G. K. Chesterton, written by F. A. Lea, a member of the Middleton Murry group in England; an essay compounded of intense appreciation and acute optimism (more of which would have so increased the value of Maisie Ward's authoritative biography). The publisher decided to make it one of a number of similar little works on well-known and not-so-well-known people.

On Nicolas Berdyaev, that member of the Eastern Orthodox Church in whose person "Russian philosophy first faced the judgment of Europe, and indeed of the whole world," the preacher of a "personalist socialism" having important points of contact with the "personalism" of Mounier and *Esprit*. On Nathan Söderblom, Lutheran archbishop of Uppsala in Sweden and one of the outstanding men in the so-called ecumenical movement which has done so much to

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bring Christians together. On George Lansbury, the English labor politician in whom Christians of all kinds and men of diverse political views recognized the marks of sanctity, who spoke of peace and love to Hitler and Mussolini face-to-face. On C. F. Andrews, Anglican missionary in India. On Eric Gill, who should need no introduction to the readers of this paper; on Niebuhr and Schweitzer and that strange genius Kierkegaard, whose names are also known to them.

Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants have worked together for this modest enterprise, and if the public be appreciative of their efforts, the publisher hopes to extend the series: to such as Vladimir Solovyev (of whom C. J. Eustace wrote in THE COMMONWEAL of January 21), the Japanese Kagawa, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, Dick Sheppard, Friedrich von Hügel, Evelyn Underhill and others.

This is a very mixed bag. Nobody could agree completely with the distinguished ideas of all of them, none could share all their views and enthusiasms: but everybody can learn, and learn much, from each of them. Truth is infinitely varied and its developments inexhaustible; mistakes have their uses, even flat-out heresies are the exaggeration or misuse of a truth: our knowledge of the sublimest truths is at the best imperfect and analogical, and only in the mind of God can all our human contradictions be reconciled. And the members of this mixed company have this in common: they are all Christians, men and women who have tried, each according to his light, to follow the teaching and example of Jesus Christ as the meaning of human life; and they are all revolutionaries, people who believe that each one of us must be born again in Christ, and that to the extent of that rebirth and its consequences society must be turned upside down: not, therefore, revolutionaries who happen to be Christian, or in spite of being Christian, but revolutionary *because* Christian.

Charles Wesley (I think) objected to the Devil having all the best tunes. Why should we present him also with some of the best words such as "revolutionary"? Or "radical"—which means one who tries to get down to the roots of things. Or "liberal"—which means one who is concerned for those things which pertain to a free man.

The Screen

The Little Film

EVERY moviegoer enjoys running on to a film that turns out to be a pleasant surprise—particularly when it is just a little film to which he went without great expectations. We all know the experience: no screaming advertising campaign, no technicolor, no exploited stars. The film didn't necessarily send us out of the theater cheering, but it was an enjoyable and unostentatious minor movie. It treated us like adults and gave us food for thought. Three such little films, widely different and not one of which is any great shakes, are offered for your consideration this week.

"It Happened Tomorrow" tells the tale of a young man who has for several days the good fortune of seeing tomorrow's newspaper. And then this good fortune turns to bad when one day he reads of his own death which will happen tomorrow at a certain time and certain place. Believe me, he spends every effort not to be in that place at that time. And you sit breathlessly as events draw him closer and closer to the situation described in the newspaper. Producer Arnold Pressburger has dressed the main part of this delightful story in 1890 sets and costumes which lend themselves well to the time-is-an-illusion theme. (Most of the film is a flashback from the present; the hero, whom we see alive and so know he somehow escaped the newspaper's account, explains that nobody believes in miracles now-a-days.) Director René Clair has mixed realism and fantasy in a manner to keep us believing and guessing; his direction shows that he enjoyed every minute of the making of this pleasant little film. Clair also assisted Dudley Nichols in the writing of the screenplay which was adapted from the stories of several authors among whom the Dunsany touch is most obvious. Dick Powell, Linda Darnell, Jack Oakie lead the performers, but you aren't as likely to remember them as much as the suspense, the fun, the eerie feeling that pervades the film, the wonderful chase which you know is going to end at the appointed time and place, and that toothless old guy (played by John Philliber) who gives the hero tomorrow's newspaper but says ominously: "It won't do you any good, Larry." This is one of the sweetest tongue-in-the-cheek pictures I've seen in a long time.

"Phantom Lady" is another little item that could slip by unnoticed except for its many fine touches which add up to make an intelligent movie. Producer Joan Harrison, who used to work with Alfred Hitchcock, is mainly responsible for the effectivness of this film that is neither star-studded nor heralded by extravagant advertising. It is a mystery thriller based on a novel by William Irish; and, while its story and conclusion won't bear too close scrutiny, its acting, use of cinema and attention to detail provide rewarding entertainment. A man (Alan Curtis) is accused of murdering his wife. He has a good alibi; he spent the evening with a stranger (Fay Helm) who cannot afterward be found, and none of his witnesses seems to remember him. The man is convicted. His secretary (Ella Raines), convinced of his innocence, follows clues that lead through a series of terrifically exciting episodes and involve a relentless police inspector (Thomas Gomez), a paranoic sculptor (Franchot Tone), a trap drummer (Elisha Cook, Jr.). In the most nerve-racking episode, this drummer takes the girl down into a cellar where a jam session is at its height—a hysterical scene made all the more effectively edgy because the picture is without the usual background music. Photographer Elwood Brendell has also caught well the depressing feel of New York's midsummer heat; and Director Robert

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Siodmak has built up one suspenseful scene after the other guaranteed to leave you with a choice assortment of goose pimples.

"Voice In the Wind" was made by Rudolph Monter and Arthur Ripley on a budget that would be considered small even for a B picture. And yet this little film through the high quality of its cinema and intelligent approach to the art expresses more effectively the suffering of the nations conquered by the Germans than many an expensive blood-and-thunder film. Unfortunately its producers went a little too arty at times and because of its vagueness and the jerkiness of its editing, its intensely serious message and emotional experience will be missed by many. At the same time the film's quality of unreality, due to its unusual reality, is its greatest asset to impress moviegoers who want their movies to be extraordinary and metaphysically moving. Set mainly on a small isle in the Lesser Antilles, "Voice In the Wind" tells the story of two Czechs: a woman (Sigrid Gurie) who is dying, and a demented pianist (Francis Lederer) who works for three brothers (Alexander Granach, J. Carroll Naish, David Cota), racketeers who ruthlessly and indifferently cheat and even murder refugees who put themselves at their mercy to be smuggled to safety. The plot is revealed in brief episodes (which are beautifully directed by Arthur Ripley who also wrote the original story on which Frederick Torberg based his script) and impressionistic snatches that move back and forth between 1940 and the still darker days when the nazis occupied Czechoslovakia. Little sunlight or cheer breaks through to brighten the gloom brought on by the nazis and by greedy men as represented by the three brothers. The acting throughout the film is kept on a high emotional pitch that contrasts powerfully with the murky lighting and locale. But in spite of the confused cutting which is frequently difficult to follow (most obscure sequence: after Lederer is mortally wounded by one of the vicious brothers, the camera shows Lederer and Gurie on a park bench in past and happier times, reciting Shelley to each other), "Voice In the Wind" speaks eloquently of the bravery of the oppressed peoples and damningly of the oppressors. Even those who hear little more in the "Voice" than the sad love story of a suffering man and woman will realize that the film is also saying that the world has always had its Philistines and men who love not their fellow human beings will die.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Gilberts

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

FOUR months ago at Tarawa atoll in the Gilbert Islands United States Marines encountered the fiercest resistance in the Pacific war; they were "the first American troops to attack a defended atoll" in this conflict. Corrected figures indicate 762 Americans killed, 169 missing and 2,100 wounded, while 4,000 Japanese defenders were slaughtered—a number of them seared to a crisp by flamethrowers as they emerged from dugouts and pillboxes. Robert Sherrod of *Time** reports that the

*Tarawa. Robert Sherrod. Duell. $2.00.

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ably and desperately defended Betio island, where most of the fighting took place, became a shambles. He himself was in the midst of the action. He notes a number of familiar phenomena: *esprit de corps* rather than conviction as to what they were fighting for carried our men along; a savage attitude toward American labor and strikes was especially acute among Marines who were union members; there was rife impatience with people back home who do not realize that "war is tough and war is horrible." Mr. Sherrod believes that there is "no way to defeat the Japanese except by extermination." It may have been bad luck that there was not enough water for the attacking Higgins boats to clear the fringe of Tarawa coral reefs, but the author says that the two days of abnormally low tide were "truly an Act of Providence," since otherwise our only possible beachhead before the formidable Japanese defenses would have been under water. No, he says, the high casualties at Tarawa simply indicate the fierce enemy resistance that has to be overcome.

What of the men and women whose tiny islands and lagoons provide a stage for this ferocious clash of America and Japan in the Central Pacific? Official dispatches are silent. Mr. Sherrod speaks of fears that the natives in great numbers would be killed in the terrific air and sea bombardment preceding actual invasion. *Catholic Missions* says that many of these natives were killed by bombs from overhead. That is not surprising, as the Gilbert Islands are the most densely populated in all Oceania.

They were discovered by white men in 1765 and named twenty-three years later by the two British captains, Marshall and Gilbert. Many of the reefs and channels were so competently charted by a United States Exploration Expedition in 1841 that the charts are still in use. Gilbert islanders, being strong and plentiful, enlisted for labor on other islands and some of those who worked in Tahiti were converted to Catholicism. Upon their return home they asked for priests, and Mass was first offered in the Gilberts on May 11, 1888. The missions so prospered that before the Japanese took over the islands in 1942 some 15,000 of the 33,000 natives on the group of islands were Catholics. Many of the missionaries were French; they completely shared the life of the people. One of them, "Mossy Teeth," was said never to bathe or shave or use a toothbrush. Like certain saints of old. "You couldn't stand within ten feet of him, he was so dirty. But the natives loved him." Robert Sherrod pays a brief tribute to these men.

The islands had an independent existence until 1892, when the ambition of one of the island chiefs (about whom more anon) gave the British a pretext for taking the archipelago under their protection. In 1915, combined with the Ellice Islands, the Gilberts became a British Crown Colony.

Native life was of extreme simplicity. The sea provided fish and turtles; coconut palms, fruit and drink; pandamus trees, fiber for clothing and building material. The sandy, coral soil was ideal for the taro plant, whose coarse root serves as a sort of South Seas potato, a staple in the island diet. Copra, the dried flesh of the coconut and an important ingredient in soaps, candles, margarine, and a substitute for cocoa butter in the manufacture of chocolate, is the principal export. The modest extent to which the Gilbert islanders were in business is indicated by the total for all of them of copra exports of some 4,000 tons (at about $20 a ton) annually. Under British rule there was considerable local autonomy, for each village had its own native council, and a magistrate with authority in all matters outside the sphere of crime. Apparently Gilbert Islanders got along quite well and were making large strides toward civilization when the strategies of modern war made an end to their relatively carefree existence.

What these Micronesians were originally like before contact with imperialist powers—or with Catholic missionaries—is vividly indicated by two chapters of Robert Louis Stevenson's "In the South Seas,"* which in his flawless prose vividly describes the first impact of firearms and European firewater upon a land of palm wine and shark-tooth swords. Curiously enough his first stay was in the kingdom of the two Makins, which at the time of the battle of Tarawa was taken by the 165th New York Infantry (the Fighting 69th) without suffering two hundred casualties. Stevenson had landed there on July 14, 1889.

The king then ruling proved to be a cruel and gloomy-looking drug addict, whose father had dispensed justice with a ruthless hand. The old man's wives had been forced to row him at dead of night to each scene of execution, which he carried out himself. Any wife who "caught a crab" en route was likely to be killed by a blow of the tiller from the king's own hand. By the time

*Dutton. Everyman's Library. $0.95.

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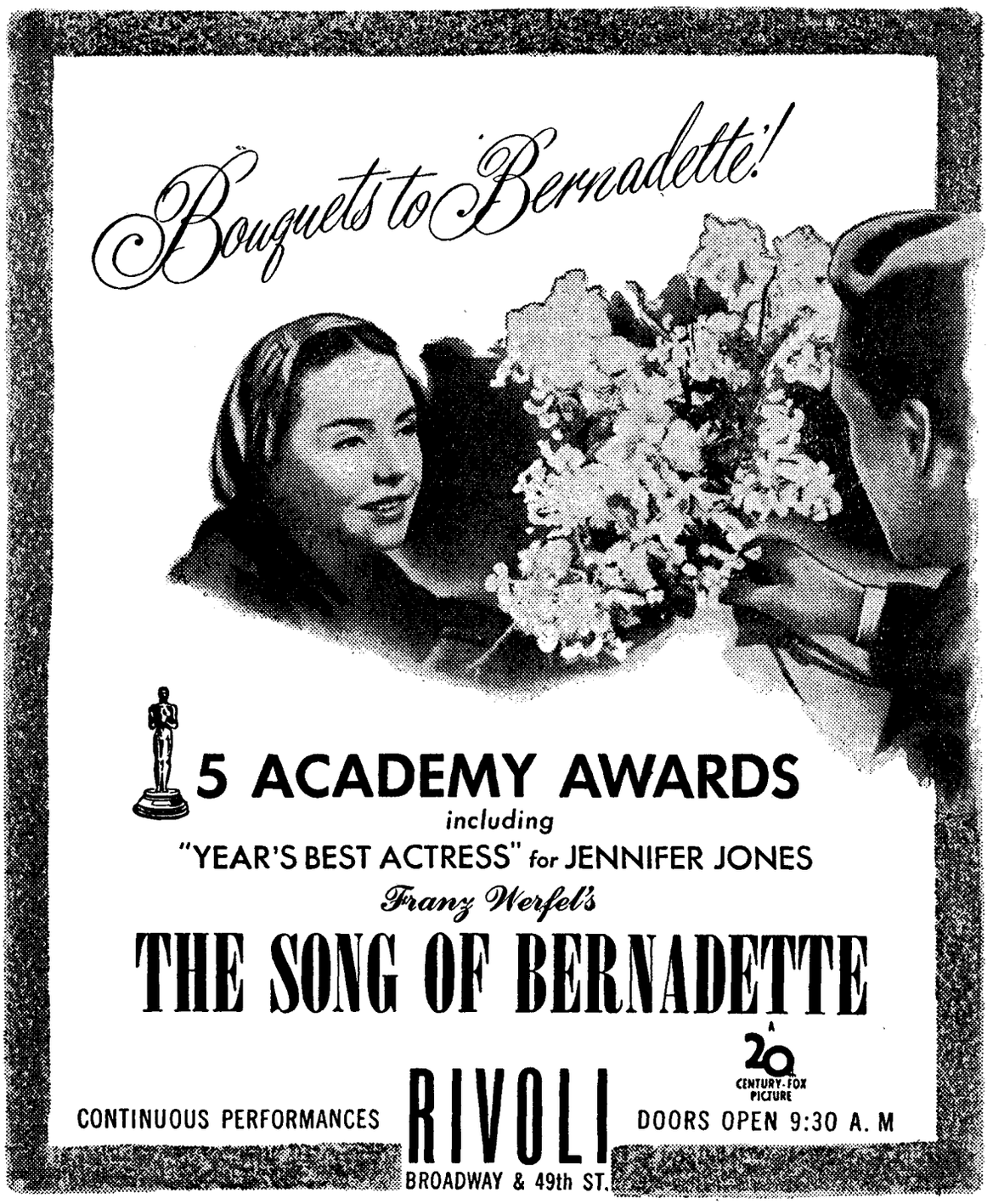
Stevenson saw him, "The Corpse," as the reigning son of the former nocturnal terror was called, had repented of his past and become a reader of the Bible under the influence of an Hawaiian evangelical missionary.

But at the moment Stevenson arrived the tabu on liquor had been off for ten days and the court was still drunk to a man. Since western firearms had been introduced, a massacre was always possible and this was what the two white traders—who had been dispensing liquor to compete for the copra trade—greatly feared. Shooting might result if they were to stop selling liquor to the now excited natives. Stevenson saw two drunken women rolling on the ground, biting and clawing each other exactly like animals; only things he had witnessed in the Soho slums of London seemed to him to have plumbed equivalent depths of human degradation. The debauch finally ended when the king of the Makins, "The Corpse," took the pledge before his people in the big mission church.

Up to ten years before, the native girls until marriage had gone everywhere stark naked yet unmolested, for the Gilbert islanders had strict ideals of sexual morality; adultery was punished by the death of both guilty parties. In Stevenson's time the girls wore only the *ridi,* or scant native skirt made of a bit of the smoked fiber of coconut leaves. He was fortunate enough to witness the traditional Gilbert Island dances which he found to have "the



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essence of all art, an unexplored, imminent significance." The natives were trained for it from childhood, and Mrs. Stevenson found it anything but indecent; rather "poetry pure and simple."

The trenches and mounds in which the people of the Makins cultivated their taro plants were an outstanding feature of a terrain no more than 12 feet above sea level. Twice a day the toddy-cutters with knife and shell would climb the lofty coconut palms to tap for the foaming brew which, if it ever were kept for two days, became an intoxicant of diabolicial effect. The cutters sang at their work, high in the swaying trees and often hidden from earth in the luxuriant foliage whence they could look far out to sea. The Makin buildings, quite innocent of nails, were held together by palm-tree lashings. Each night at nine, upon a signal of the bell from the mission church, everyone retired to his humble dwelling and mosquito netting. He who had any reason for venturing abroad before four the next morning had to carry a large burning torch wherever he went. Only the police were exempt.

"The Corpse" in his gloomy fashion gave indication that he knew that his throne was insecure. He was afraid of the council of "Old Men"; he was fearful of the chiefs of the other islands in his atoll domain. One of the latter, Karaiti of Makin, whom Stevenson likened to the Black Douglas, provided an interesting illustration of the working of the primitive mind. It was fifty-five years ago and a white trader had told Karaiti about airplanes. The chief thereupon made some wings of his own, fastened them to his shoulders, and launched himself from the end of a pier. When he fell ignominiously into the sea and had to be rescued by some of his wives because the wings entangled him, he declared flatly that the trader had lied to him, that flying was obviously impossible.

While "The Corpse" grew ever more gloomy and fearful, Tembinok of Apemama exulted in his strength a hundred miles to the south, where Stevenson sailed next. His island was taken by thirty scouts of the United States Marines last November. He had once been so fat that he could scarcely navigate, but a trader had advised him to walk for exercise, which had done the trick. At times he ensconced his still imposing bulk in a woman's gown, but ordinarily disported a Goering-like array of uniforms. He boarded every foreign ship putting in to his port, lashing a large wooden frame of his own to the vessel in case his visitor should founder. Where white traders manipulated the governments of other islands, Tembinok had allowed only one white man even to remain in Apemama, and he a recluse. Silence was demanded above all else by the "Terror of the Gilberts."

He had the copra monopoly for his whole domain. He never paid his workmen anything, although he generously gave them tobacco now and then. All the firearms of his islands were kept in the armory within the royal palace. Liquor was forbidden to his subjects. No one else could dispense tobacco. "I got power," he loved to say.

Most extraordinary of all, and most difficult for an American to understand, was the fact that he had arranged to have his palace manned entirely by women. At dusk the few and unimportant male attendants had to withdraw. Even the sentries were old women who warned of the approach of anyone by throwing a pebble from one to another all round the palace wall. Stevenson testifies that this all-female organization functioned with extraordinary smoothness and efficiency. Tembinok had even invented his own card game; he assured himself of always winning by putting up a double stake and getting the choice of two hands, but his wives never caught on. The tobacco salary he paid them he always won back at cards; they remained completely dependent upon him for clothes, honors, luxuries, everything. Tembinok presided over all with an air of magnanimous benignity. To think that he found an all-feminine household the secret of securing absolute obedience—and silence, too!

Stevenson was struck by the order, security and lack of liberty throughout Tembinok's island kingdom. With considerable prescience he remarks: "The more I viewed and admired this triumph of firm rule, the more I was haunted and troubled by a problem, the problem (perhaps) of tomorrow for ourselves. Here was a people protected from all serious misfortune, relieved of all serious anxieties, and deprived of what we call our liberty. Did they like it, and what was their sentiment toward the ruler?" Rather negative, he managed to find out.

For all his power Tembinok manifested a number of childish traits. One of the provisions to which the Stevensons agreed in order to stay at Apemama for a while was that the king would be free at all times to drop in for meals. Whenever the monarch was not on hand, he was to be regaled with one of the dishes from the Stevenson table. When no reference to Captain Cook could be found in the Gilbert Island Bible (comprising the psalms and the New Testament) he was convinced that that English adventurer was completely fictitious. He wept like a child when the Stevensons decided to depart.

★

The Japanese have been driven out; American garrisons will eventually go home. To what extent in the post-war period will the native survivors and other Pacific colonials get a chance to develop as autonomous peoples?

Editors' Choice

THE CHURCH AND THE LIBERAL SOCIETY. *Emmet John Hughes. Princeton.* $3.00.

VICTORY WITHOUT PEACE. *Roger Burlingame and Alden Stevens. Harcourt.* $2.75.

PALESTINE, LAND OF PROMISE. *Walter Clay Lowdermilk. Harper.* $2.50.

Man-Made Demons

IN HIS STUDY of the history of the last 500 years, from the point of view of man as a social being rather than as an individual, Emmet John Hughes tends to make things a little too black and white; the positions he takes, though basically sound, are a little too ironclad. The result is that this book, "The Church and the Liberal Society," is not a winning book. It will bring great com-

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fort and ease of mind to those who have thought along the same lines as its author, for here they will find powerful reinforcement of their own thinking. But unhappily it is scarcely likely to convince those whom it attacks—Marxists, capitalists, fascists and non-Christian democrats. For Mr. Hughes is indeed a democrat, but he insists that the only firm basis for democracy and for political liberty and for asserting the rights of man lies in Christianity, and specifically in the Catholic Church. Of course he is careful to point out that the Catholic Church is not the same thing as its historical personnel, but how many of his readers will constantly bear this in mind as they peruse his pages? He is critical of the personnel of the Church. He frankly admits that the Church has often failed to fulfill social missions which he insists she alone could fulfill. He makes it perfectly clear that churchmen are often governed by base motives. But his intransigeance of statement will surely prove little convincing to those who know only the aspects which he himself condemns.

Of course his use of the term *liberal* is a very special and carefully defined use. It represents that whole, irrational, inconsistent complex which was condemned in the Syllabus of Errors and which so few people who use the term *liberal* fully understand. Thus we must remember that it has been one of the constant tenets of liberalism that the rich have a right to exploit the poor and that poverty and suffering and want are natural things in society which cannot be eliminated. This being readily demonstrable from the record, why is it that we use the term *liberal* to describe people who seek to end the exploitation of the poor or who seek to wipe out poverty and want? Of all the words in the vocabulary of modern man, *liberal* is perhaps the trickiest. It inevitably has a connotation of generosity, and hence is a pleasant word. Therefore any outright condemnation of "liberalism" always requires real courage, for it will seem to the unthinking like the condemnation of a good thing. Of course basically the word has two quite contradictory meanings. It signifies all the psychological atmosphere which has arisen from the notion that human action is good in itself and should not be fettered by any reference to absolutes. A liberal in this sense is a person who believes in complete liberty. Obviously, in a given society, only those can enjoy a wide measure of liberty who have the power to do so, and inevitably their enjoyment of such liberty will involve loss of liberty to those who have not got the power. Hence the liberal society saw the institution of a more ruthless attitude toward the poor and the weak than has any society since the introduction of Christianity. The other sense in which *liberal* is commonly used is that of generosity, kindliness, charity—all personal attributes which endear those who possess or achieve them.

Mr. Hughes says nothing very original in his book; he is chiefly to be congratulated on having assembled excellent material and synthesized it in a relatively small number of pages. His thesis, in other words, is not a new thesis, but it is written freshly and with conviction. His is a volume which should be read and pondered by all those who like to think of themselves as being liberals, even though, as has been pointed out above, his intransigeance of manner is likely to repel precisely the people who most need to ponder what he says. And he says one thing concerning the difficulties with which the Church will have to struggle if she is to succeed in giving leadership to the world which deserves to be reproduced and to be emphasized by every Catholic:

> No matter how profound be the ideal contradiction between the principles of such an institution and those of the world around it, it is from the existing economy, whatever be its form, that financial strength must be drawn—a fact which does not reinforce the vigor of the Church's revolt from the Liberal Society or its capitalistic ordering of economic life. There follows quickly from this a too frequently apathetic view of the social issues involved in the uncritical perpetuation of Liberal economics: an over-anxious tendency to sharpen the edge of the spiritual sword when Marxism is attacked, an often perceptible softening of the blows when Liberalism is the issue.

1918—1944

THERE is not a sentence in this book that talks about the present but there is not a page that does not make one wonder—sometimes with what amounts to almost agony—about the present. The book opens with a chapter on Washington, in January, 1918. The crowds in the Union Station, the crowds of government workers looking for lodging; Billy Sunday was there preaching: he was a wonderful preacher. And that first chapter ends with Woodrow Wilson reading to the House and the Senate one point after another of the principles that should govern the peace until there were fourteen points in all. The rest of the book tells what happened to the fourteen points.

It tells this story in a new way. The narrative and the dialogue are based on a very complete and careful documentation. We do not know about Mr. Stevens but we do know that, in addition to the documentation, Roger Burlingame got around a great deal in those days, abroad and at home, and that he is able to call on his own memories and his own experience for much that gives color and authenticity to this account. So that what in a hack writer would look like impossible omniscience results here from a perfectly possible knowledge. This is a sound book. It is a little like the atrocity stories. Some of them are invented but some of them are not invented. This is a terrifying story but it is not invented.

The authors take you all over Europe, from one capital to another and you hear what the peoples of Europe were saying about the war and what the hopes were that they placed in the peace. There were the hopes of the Russians, for instance, and then the drama of Brest Litovsk. There were also the hopes of various nations which were concealed in the secret treaties and some of these were realized and some were not. There were the French hopes of security and the promises made to the French and broken. There was the American hope that the peace would be just. We know what happened to that hope.

After a while all the hope that existed anywhere among the peoples came to be centered on the person of Woodrow Wilson. And then the politicians got busy with Wilson. The European politicians and the American politicians. For worthy reasons and for ignoble reasons. The peoples never did anything to Wilson. The peoples trusted Wilson until after the politicians had broken him down. Or if you would rather call them statesmen, it does not matter. Even the American people trusted Wilson until he was no longer able to talk to them, until after the statesmen had finished him off. It was not the American people who destroyed the League and the peace of Versailles. It was the machinery which represented the American people that destroyed Wilson. Wilson, the Senate and the House represented the American people. But some-

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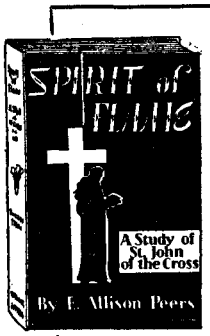

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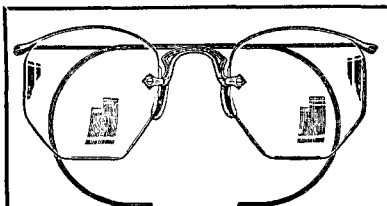

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thing went wrong with the machinery; the machinery broke down. This was anybody's fault. Of course it was Senator Lodge's fault and partially Wilson's. Something went wrong with the gears; there was a terrible sound of gears tearing themselves to pieces and when it was all over there was no longer any peace treaty, any plan, anything consecutive, and all the peoples of the world were left without hope.

The plan was destroyed and this account is a very clear one of what happened. It is a very dramatic account. An angry account and it is not very difficult to look about us at the world today and see why it is not unreasonable to be angry at the men who made the world what it is today.

In 1918 the peoples of the world had more of a plan for peace than they have today. The fourteen points were more of a plan than is the Atlantic Charter. But the "Victory without Peace" broke down that plan and with it the hopes it kindled. What is terrifying is that those hopes were stronger than any of the hopes we now possess.

Achievements of a People

FAR TOO little attention is paid today to the importance of sound agrarianism in the rebuilding of our shattered world after the war. The increasingly popular tendency is to envisage things solely in political terms. The key to peace in many minds is simply an international police force, while those who think farther and give some weight to vital economic considerations rarely get beyond such subjects as tariffs, cartels, reconversion of industry and the like. Dr. Lowdermilk, in his "Palestine, Land of Promise," performs a service by pointing out that "until food is available, the miner does not dig into the bowels of the earth for minerals and ore, and mechanics do not process ores and make the intricate machines of modern technology. There is no substitute for food in the complex division of labor in modern civilization." How many peoples are now agonizingly conscious that obtaining adequate food is the most basic of all problems of rehabilitation!

Dr. Lowdermilk is a soil conservationist who has investigated agricultural conditions the world over. He is a non-Jew, but what he found in Palestine and Transjordan have made him an ardent Zionist. The Jews themselves are sharply divided on the problem of Zionism. It has religious, political and many other implications. But the author of this fascinating little volume makes it abundantly clear that Jewish settlement has greatly raised the living standards of the Arabs, that thus far the Jews own but 6 percent of the land and 14 percent of the cultivated area, but that nevertheless they have achieved wonders within the past two decades. Palestine is so much better off because of the Jewish migration of the past half century that the only explanation he can find for the Arab opposition is that "national groups do not act rationally."

But to return to agrarian matters. The problem did not exist in Old Testament times, a fact amply substantiated by archeology. After years of neglect the soil has become eroded and impoverished, and literally thousands of abandoned villages dot the barren countryside. The depredations of the Bedouin nomads and the age-old warfare between herders and farmers have taken their toll. Malaria, trachoma and a high death rate were rampant. It was under such conditions that refugees from Czarist Russia pogroms, knowing only how to culti-

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vate the rich black soil of the Ukraine, began settling in Palestine. Eventually through irrigation, soil reclamation, reforestation and electrification the Jews began slowly reviving the economy of their ancient homeland. After fifty years the land is far from self-sustaining as to food. Yet at a glance a few of the excellent before-and-after halftones in Dr. Lowdermilk's little volume is enough to explain the author's strong acclaim. The transformation is unbelievable.

What has been accomplished thus far but scratches the surface of Palestine's possibilities. The author believes its population could one day be increased tenfold. His major project is a Jordan Valley Authority similar to our own TVA. Water for agriculture in that subtropical land, and waterpower for industry are contemplated on a vast scale. First the salt-soaked soil would have to be "leached" by fresh water as the Dutch did in their successful land reclamation along the Zuider Zee. The JVA would also be a boon to Trans-Jordan where semi-starvation characterizes the sparsely settled countryside. Much of desert Negreb (South Palestine), which strongly resembles southern California, would also be made habitable and productive. The possibilities are tremendous and the development of Palestine would raise the level of the whole Near East. Palestine would serve as a shining model for rehabilitation elsewhere. If the returning Zionists can maintain the zest with which they have tackled the most strenuous problems, and adequate funds are amassed for the type of project that has proved its worth, the reclamation of Palestine may startle the world. There could hardly be a more convincing tribute to a brave people beginning life anew under the most unlikely circumstances than this factual study by a world-traveled agronomist who is highly conscious of "man's moral obligation to the good earth."

More Books of the Week

The Vatican and the War. Camille M. Cianfarra. Dutton. $3.00.

OWING to the Pope's position as spiritual leader of a Church numbering among its adherents members of every race and nation on earth, the Vatican is necessarily neutral as between civil governments. Its concern is for peace and the welfare of men everywhere. Consequently any history of Vatican diplomacy preceding and during this war must include that of every nation involved.

The author of the book under review is well fitted to do this. He was attached to the Rome Bureau of the New York *Times* from 1935 up to the day Italy declared war upon us, and he specialized in Vatican news. Sources of information were available to him which permitted him to pack the 329 pages of this book with facts and to furnish the connecting links between events which most of us have known only as isolated occurrences.

It is not easy reading. The story winds back and forth in time. Yet the individual chapters stand by themselves. A careful reader can trace the intrigues by which the Axis tricked the democracies as well as the Vatican's continued attempts to mediate and preserve the peace. Several points stand out. In the first place, whenever the Vatican and Fascist Italy stood on the same side, it was always for different reasons. Fascism was seeking the proper time to strike in order to secure power. The Vatican, possessing no physical power, was attempting, through its moral force, to make governments stop and consider the spiritual

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No important topic is overlooked, and the pastor will here find everything of real value to him in his soul-saving ministry.—*The Ecclesiastical Review.*

It is clear, readable, and full of useful suggestions. What we especially like is the spirit of earnest piety which pervades the work. The author keeps in mind the golden rule, that the chief way to sanctify others is to sanctify oneself. The reading of this book means more than the acquisition of useful practical knowledge; it is a spiritual reading adapted to priestly life.—*The Upshaw Magazine.*

It affords practical advice on the administration of the Sacraments and Sacramentals, and valuable hints on the management of sodalities, clubs, etc.—in fact, it is a storehouse of useful information on those details of parish life.

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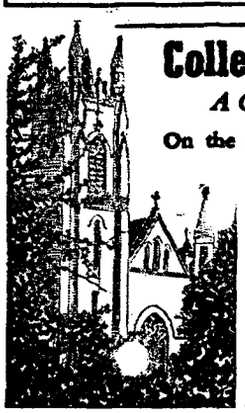

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and physical consequences of the war which was about to break out. Both Pius XI and XII showed that their concern centered on the welfare of individual men; on the maintenance of peace and order regardless of the form of government under which men lived. The signing of concordats and the retention of diplomatic relations with all warring States stand out, consequently, as attempts to safeguard the rights of man. It is a noteworthy fact that as soon as any government was proved beyond question to set itself in the place of God by demanding absolute control over the human conscience, that government's acts were condemned in no uncertain terms.

Cianfarra records the bad with the good. He makes no attempt to whitewash the Papal mistakes or the evils the Papacy is trying to overcome. But, while noting the mistakes and the failure to maintain peace, he shows that the Papacy, representing a world-wide Church, must be considered in the future. His outline of its policy should allay the fear that it seeks clerical, authoritarian states as the future pattern for Europe. The impression that the Vatican has not done all it could to show which side it is on, which impression the author records in his foreword, remains ever present in this reviewer's mind. True, the condemnations of totalitarianism have been clear and forceful. But we seek in vain for support of true democracy which is the flower of the Christian spirit. For it alone permits to man that full freedom of choice under the law which God Himself gave to man as his primary unalienable right when He created him. WILLIAM AGAR.

The Eucharist. The Mystery of Holy Thursday. François Mauriac. Longmans. $1.50.

HERE are seventy-five pages, thirteen short chapters, devoted to various aspects and doctrines of the Holy Eucharist and tied together by their reference to the events of Holy Thursday. The author alludes to his first impressions of the Day, as he lived through it as a child, in Bordeaux. He was impressed by the visits to many churches, the lavish embellishment of the altars of repose, and the devotion of the multitudes, but his boyish soul saw through the trappings to the reality; with matured conviction he is able to write: "The Eucharist is what is most real in the world."

This little book has a delectable sweetness distilled from the soul of a man who, while writing like a poet, knows the hard and unlovely facets of the modern world; has heard its pagan clamors and recognized for what they are its vapid claims. He sees that, but for Holy Thursday and the Sacrament of Love then instituted, "life with a small 'l' is not Life." On that great day of the First Love-Feast the bestowal of Life occurred which has revolutionized creation; for there Christ performed the miracle of the Mass, gave His New Commandment (*Mandatum*) of Love, arranged by Holy Orders for the perpetuation of His Sacrament, and infused into His followers the new leaven of selfless love. The contempt and the hatred, the doubt and the misunderstanding of centuries have not been able to destroy the power and the meaning of Holy Thursday. Its mystery has permeated time and space, only to become real and vital again, day by day, in every celebration of Holy Mass.

There are excellent passages on the Priesthood, the *Viaticum*, the Jewish Passover, and Transsubstantiation. Holy Scripture is abundantly used; also quotations at the chapter headings from the writings of the saints. It is a fine little book for Lenten reading, bound to fill one with new awe and a deeper desire to know more about "the

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mystery of Holy Thursday which is defenseless as love always is."

RICHARD FLOWER.

They Came to London. Paul Tabori. Macmillan. $2.75.

THIS is an attempt to give artistic integrity to the motives for which men fight. But I am putting it mildly when I say that it is not a classic. It ought to be possible to write a great book about this war—but this book is not it. Perhaps it is too early in the war. Perhaps we are not yet receptive to a great war book. What is more likely is that great events must be greatly experienced and greatly suffered in order to be comprehended. And the silence of suffering must be long, and the soul's knowledge grow to poetry, whether of wonder or of bitterness.

That is why there is about most of the present war books something that is cheap, and they bear the same relation either to horror or to courage as does a blonde singing war songs in the Persian Room. And that is why those who are suffering the horrific knowledge of this war are not the ones who are writing about it.

What Mr. Tabori is trying to do is to tell us the story of twelve diverse people who come to London from different countries. They come covered with shame or hate or humiliation. They come with the knowing that horror and brutality and occupation brings. Some are the spiritually blind from whose eyes the scales have fallen. Some bring an avenging spirit, and some an invincible one; and some the desire for death rather than life on another's terms.

The reasons men fight and the reasons men die are different, every one. But common to all of these is that, somehow, they have known that nazism must strip the mind or the soul, try to elevate lust, and starve or deny the things of the spirit. And each of these people, in a different way, has made the universal discovery that the human spirit cannot for long be bribed by compensations. It is in that commonality that they take flight to London.

But these ideas are all implicit in the book. It is even possible that I have read them into it. For I am certain that Mr. Tabori is well intentioned. But he has not given his material artistic fulfillment.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

Great Russian Short Stories. Edited by Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Macmillan. $4.00.

THIS hefty volume includes such famous stories as Pushkin's "Queen of Spades," Gogol's "The Overcoat" and Dostoievsky's "Notes from the Underground." About a third of the book is devoted to Anton Chekhov, from whom twenty-five stories are included. It is overgenerous on the Chekhov side, but it is a good collection competently edited. These tales show convincingly that no one in recent times has been able to touch the Russians for sheer narrative art.

CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. Leo J. TRESE, who has just returned from Puerto Rico, is stationed at St. Mary Magdalen's parish, Melvindale, Mich.

Donald ATTWATER is a contributing editor of THE COMMONWEAL. He is the author of many books, and a specialist on the Eastern Rites.

William AGAR is vice-president of Freedom House.

Rev. Richard FLOWER, O.S.B., is a monk of St. Gregory's Priory, Portsmouth, R. I.

Francis DOWNING is assistant educational director of the United Auto Workers Union.

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JESSE STUART, author of "Taps for Private Tussie," has a story, "The Wind Blew East," which brings to life some more of his inimitable Kentucky hill people.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER analyzes Werner Jaeger's remarkable "The Ideals of Greek Culture" and intimates a solution for the problem of discipline in a democracy.

M. A. COUTURIER, O.P., contributes an eloquent little essay on the effects of the great masterpieces of European art on those fighting this war.

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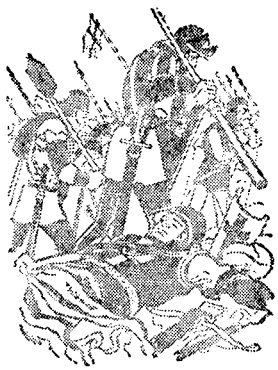

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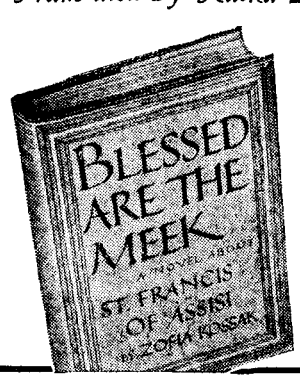

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